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ROUTING AND RECORD SHEET

SUBJECT: (Optional)

TASS on the Pope

FROM: Stanley M. Moskowitz
NIO/USSR-EE
Rm. 7E62

EXTENSION

NO.

NIC 10575-82

DATE

30 December 1982

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TO: (Officer designation, room number, and building)

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COMMENTS (Number each comment to show from whom to whom. Draw a line across column after each comment.)

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THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

National Intelligence Council

NIC 10575-82
30 December 1982

NOTE FOR: Acting Director of Central Intelligence
FROM : Stanley M. Moskowitz
National Intelligence Officer for USSR-EE
SUBJECT : TASS on the Pope

1. The TASS article on the Pope--front-paged in today's Washington Post--is a very remarkable initiative by the Soviets. It specifically links the Pope's "anti-socialist activity" to the events in Poland. This comes at an odd time, when Solidarity is very much on the defensive and, while the Soviets complain about some of Jaruzelski's maneuvers, Moscow still has reasons to be pleased with the general line of these developments--certainly in comparison to the situation of the previous two years. In effect, the statement constitutes a rationale for why the Soviet Union might have been behind an effort to kill the Pope.

2. The TASS statement is either evidence of the kind of Soviet truculence of the most menacing sort or an example of maladroitness that cast doubts on Andropov and his new agitprop chief, Stukahlin. But can we assume that Moscow would not expect the West to make the connection between this attack and the stories of the Bulgarian-KGB plot?

3. The time has come, I think, for the administration to gently place a stick in Andropov's eye. It would be useful to have a White House statement noting that the TASS article raises questions about Moscow's stance on the attempted assassination of the Pope and its view of the ideals for which he stands. Other initiatives might also be useful, if we want to significantly turn-up the gain.

cc: DDI

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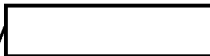
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